



Department of Justice

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MAN SENTENCED FOR PILOTING COMMERCIAL SHIPS ON GREAT LAKES WITH FRAUDULENT COAST GUARD LICENSE

SYRACUSE, NEW YORK - Richard S. Hartunian, United States Attorney for the Northern District of New York, announced today that Mark Anselm, 37, of Clayton, N.Y., was sentenced to seven years in prison before the U.S. District Judge Glen T. Suddaby after having pled guilty to six felony offenses that charged him with making false statements to officials of the United States Coast Guard, possession and use of an altered merchant marine license, and aggravated identity theft. In addition, Anselm was sentenced to three years of supervised release following his release from prison. While in prison and thereafter Anselm has been directed to submit to mental health counseling and treatment.

In pleading guilty, Anselm admitted that during 2011 and 2012 he held himself out to federal officials, to various marina owners, and to other potential employers as being a licensed commercial ship pilot when he possessed no such license. Anselm admitted to having repeatedly presented fraudulent merchant marine licenses to employers and potential employers that he had altered to substitute his name. With his false licenses, he gained employment and captained various commercial ships on Lake Ontario including operating a tour boat within the 1000 Islands. His criminal conduct was discovered by the Coast Guard after he grounded a tug boat in Canadian waters on June 19, 2012 that he falsely claimed he owned. The ensuing investigation

revealed numerous instances of Anselm holding himself out as a licensed commercial merchant marine captain based upon licenses that he had forged.

This case was investigated by Special Agents of the Coast Guard Investigative Service, Buffalo Field Office and Department of Homeland Security, Office of the Inspector General. Prosecution is being handled by Assistant United States Attorney Craig A. Benedict. Mr. Benedict may be contacted for questions regarding this case at 315-448-0726.

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